

American Battle Monuments Commission

Brittany American Cemetery and Memorial

LOCATION

The Brittany American Cemetery and Memorial is situated about one-mile southeast of the village of St. James, Manche, France on highway N-798. St. James lies 12 miles/19 kilometers south of Avranches, 9 miles/15 kilometers southeast of Pontorson, 15 miles/25 kilometers southeast of Mont St. Michel and 14 miles/22 kilometers north of Fougères. It may be reached by automobile from Paris (201 miles/324 kilometers) in about 5 ½ hours via highway N-12 to Fougères and thence north on N-798 to St. James.

Rail service to St. James is available from Gare Montparnasse (Gare du Maine) in Paris via Avranches or Pontorson with a change of trains at Folligny. The trip by rail also takes approximately 5 ½ hours. Taxi service to the cemetery is available from the railroad stations in Avranches, Pontorson, and St. James. Bus service is available from Pontorson to St. James.

Avranches, Pontorson, Mont St. Michael, and Fougères have adequate hotel accommodations; those in the village of St. James are somewhat austere.

HOURS

The cemetery is open daily to the public from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm except December 25 and January 1. It is open on host country holidays. When the cemetery is open to the public, a staff member is on duty in the Visitors' Building to answer questions and escort relatives to grave and memorial sites.

HISTORY

Ground combat in northwestern France commenced with the Allied landing on the beaches of Normandy, 6 June 1944. During the early morning hours of darkness, three airborne divisions (the British 6th and the U.S. 82nd and 101st) were dropped in the rear of the beach areas to cover deployment of the seaborne assault forces. Simultaneously, Allied naval forces swept the English Channel of mines and preceded the assault vessels to the landing areas. At 6:30 a.m., under the cover of intense naval and air bombardment, six U.S., British and Canadian divisions began landing on Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword beaches in the greatest amphibious assault of recorded history.

The U.S. 4th Division pushed rapidly inland from Utah Beach to join the previously dropped airborne divisions. Its early success and light casualties contrasted sharply with those of the U.S. 1st and 29th Divisions on Omaha Beach to the east, where the enemy resisted with every device and weapon at his disposal. The configuration of Omaha Beach alone presented a major obstacle. Instead of sloping gently from the high ground

to its rear, the beach area terminated in precipitous steep sandy bluffs. U.S. Troops had to cross an open area varying in width from a few yards at each end to about 200 yards in the center, and then attack up the steep bluffs to the plateau on which the Normandy American Cemetery now stands. The only concealment available was patches of tall marsh grass. Fighting was bitter and casualties heavy. Nevertheless, before D-Day was over, the U.S. 1st Division had taken the high ground to its front. To the east on Gold, Junno and Sword landing beaches, the British and Canadian divisions forged steadily ahead. Under the cover of continuous naval gunfire and air support, the landings' first objective, to link together the individual beachheads, was accomplished within a week. During the same period, temporary anchorages and artificial harbors were created off the beachhead area by sinking ships and prefabricated concrete caissons to the channel floor, to facilitate the unloading of troops and supplies. As a result, the Allies were able to reinforce and increase the size and strength of their Armies rapidly. The second objective of the landings was to clear the Cotentin Peninsula with its port of Cherbourg and capture Caen and St. Lo. On 26 June, American troops freed Cherbourg; 13 days later on 9 July British and Canadian troops fought their way into Caen; and on 18 July 1944 Americans took St. Lo, accomplishing the second objective. The final objective was to break through the ring of defenses that the enemy had established around the beaches. The stage was set for the breakout with a paralyzing air bombardment on 25 July by the U.S. Eighth and Ninth Air Forces and the Royal Air Force along a five mile front west of St. Lo. Aided by British forces pinning down the enemy in the eastern portion of the beach area toward Caen, the U.S. First Army stormed out of the beachhead liberating Coutances three days later. Within a week, the newly activated U.S. Third Army had cleared Avranches and was advancing toward Paris on a broad front with the First Army. The two armies fanned out westward toward Brest, southward toward the Loire, and eastward toward the Seine. On 7 August 1944, one week after the opening of the Avranches gap, a powerful counterattack was launched by the enemy, in an attempt to cut the columns of the advancing U.S. First and Third Armies. After initial success in the region of Mortain, the U.S. First Army was able to stem the counterattack and push back enemy forces.

In mid-august, enemy forces were threatened with encirclement by the U.S. Third Army which had turned northward from Le Mans, to meet the Canadian Army advancing southward from its beachhead. Despite desperate resistance by the enemy to prevent encirclement, the two Allied armies met at Chambois on 21 August. Enemy forces had the choice of remaining in the Falaise pocket or fleeing toward the Seine River in disorder. In a matter of days, U.S. Third Army troops were in the outskirts of Paris and it was liberated on 25 August 1944.

While these actions were taking place, the newly-formed Ninth U.S. Army relieved the third army units that had remained in Brittany and took over their mission of containing the strong enemy garrisons which still held out there. Although stubbornly contested, St. Malo fell to U.S. forces on 1 September and Brest on 18 September 1944. At this time, most of the U.S. Ninth Army was ordered to the German border where enemy resistance was stiffening. Some Ninth army units remained to contain the enemy garrisons at Lorient and St. Nazaire which did not surrender until 10 and 11 May 1945, respectively.

SITE

The Brittany American Cemetery, 28 acres in extent, lies among the hedgerows in rolling farm country near the border between the Brittany and Normandy regions of France. It is one of fourteen permanent American World War II military cemetery memorials erected by the American Battle Monuments Commission on foreign soil. The site was liberated on 2 August 1944 by the 8th Infantry Division; a temporary military cemetery was established on it three days later. Subsequently, the site was selected to be one of fourteen permanent American World War II military cemeteries on foreign soil. After the war, when the temporary cemeteries were being disestablished by the American Graves Registration Service, the remains of American military Dead whose next of kin had requested interment on foreign soil were moved from the temporary cemeteries to one of the permanent cemetery sites, usually the one closest to the temporary location. The 4,410 American military Dead buried in the Brittany American Cemetery lost their lives in the area of northwestern France extending from the beachhead westward to Brest and eastward to the Seine and represent 43 percent of the burials originally made in the region. They were interred there by the American Graves Registration Service in the distinctive grave patterns proposed by the cemetery's architect and approved by this Commission. Most of them died in the fighting in and around St. Lo.

The design and construction of all cemetery facilities in the permanent World War I and II cemeteries, were the responsibility of the American Battle Monuments Commission, i.e., the memorial, chapel, visitors' building, superintendent's quarters, service facilities and paths, roads and walls. The Commission was also responsible for the sculpture, landscaping and other improvements. Construction of the permanent cemetery memorial at Brittany was completed in 1956.

ARCHITECTS

Architect for the cemetery and its memorial was William T. Aldrich of Boston, Massachusetts. The landscape architects were Shurcliff and Shurcliff, also of Boston.

GENERAL LAYOUT

The main entrance of the cemetery is located on the south side of Highway N-798 across from the service area and the superintendent's quarters. A short semi-circular driveway flanked by a low granite wall leads from the highway to the wrought iron main entrance gate with its piers of gray granite. The driveway contains space for limited visitor parking and there is a small parking area across the highway.

Immediately inside the entrance gate, on the left, is the Visitors' Building. A surfaced path, gently curving to the right, leads past the Visitors' Building to the rear of the memorial chapel. In front of it is a terrace flanked by two flag poles. Emanating from each side of the terrace, inward from the base of the flag poles and facing the graves area, is a low stone wall with tablets in which are engraved the names of the servicemen missing in action in the region.

Steps lead down from the terrace in front of the chapel to the central mall lined with bottom boxwoods and European chestnut trees, which bisects the graves area into

two groups of eight fanshaped plots. At the far (east) end of the mall is a rectangular stone cenotaph.

Inside the main entrance along the perimeter wall to the right is the assistant superintendent's quarters.

THE MEMORIAL

The Memorial Chapel consists of an antechamber and tower, museum room and chancel. Typical of the ecclesiastical architecture of the region, it is Romanesque in design.

THE EXTERIOR

The exterior of the memorial is constructed of local La Pyrie granite. At its east end is a sculpture group, "Youth Triumphant Over Evil," designed by Lee Lawrie of Easton, MD and executed in Chauvigny limestone from the Poitiers region by Jean Juge of Paris. Carved in its granite base is the inscription:

I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT

*

I HAVE FINISHED MY COURSE

*

I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH

(2 Timothy IV, 7).

Over the entrance door is a sculpture group, also designed by Lee Lawrie and executed by Jean Juge, consisting of an eagle, shield, stars, laurel and arrows representing the Great Seal of the United States; the shield is flanked by two floating angels representing victory. The one to the left of the observer, wearing the Columbian cap, is in mourning. She holds in her right hand the laurel of the brave, and in her left hand the palm of sacrifice. The figure to the right is a triumphant Victory, clothed in mail and wearing a helmet. Her right hand holds a sword, her left hand a trumpet. Below the sculpture over the tympanum is the inscription:

IN MEMORY OF
THE VALOR AND THE SACRIFICES
WHICH CONSECRATE THIS SOIL

ANTECHAMBER

Inside the main entrance door to the right of the antechamber is a small room with a stained-glass window in the north wall containing the figure of St. James of Compostello. On the east wall is engraved the dedicatory inscription in French and English, of which this is the English version:

1941-1945

*
IN PROUD REMEMBRANCE OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS
OF HER SONS AND IN HUMBLE TRIBUTE
TO THEIR SACRIFICES
THIS MEMORIAL HAS BEEN ERECTED BY
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

On the opposite wall is this prayer:

O GOD WHO ART THE AUTHOR OF PEACE
AND LOVER OF CONCORD,
DEFEND US THY HUMBLE SERVANTS
IN ALL ASSAULTS OF OUR ENEMIES,
THAT WE SURELY TRUSTING IN THY DEFENSE
MAY NOT FEAR THE POWER OF ANY ADVERSARIES

In the tympanum above the main entrance door is a stained-glass window containing the emblem of SHAEF – the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force.

To the left of the antechamber is the stairway leading to the tower. The tower has an overall height of 99 feet/30.2 meters. The lookout platform, 63 feet/19.2 meters above the ground, is reached from the antechamber by a stairway of 98 steps and landings. From the platform Mont St. Michel, 15 miles/24 kilometers to the northwest, is visible on clear days. The tower also afford an impressive view of the stately pattern of the headstone extending before the memorial, as well as of the peaceful surrounding countryside.

MUSEUM ROOM

Beyond the antechamber is the museum room. Projecting from high on its north and south walls are the flags of the following components of our military services during World War II: Air Corps; Armor; Cavalry; Chemical Warfare Service; Coast Artillery Corps; Corps of Engineers; Field Artillery; Chaplains, Christian; Chaplains, Jewish; Infantry; Medical Department; Navy artillery Battalion; Navy Infantry Battalion; Ordnance Department; Quartermaster Corps; Signal Corps.

Immediately above the entrance door in the museum room are the American, British, and French national flags, and the engraved inscription:

DUTY
*
HONOR
*
COUNTRY.

Within the museum room , on the interior wall flanking the doorway to the south, is engraved this extract from President Franklin D. Roosevelt's D-Day prayer on the occasion of the invasion of Normandy:

ALMIGHTY GOD:
OUR SONS, PRIDE OF OUR NATION,
THIS DAY HAVE SET UPON A MIGHTY ENDEAVOR,
A STRUGGLE TO PRESERVE OUR REPUBLIC,
OUR RELIGION, AND OUR CIVILIZATION

THEY WILL BE SORE TRIED,
BY NIGHT AND BY DAY,
WITHOUT REST – UNTIL THE VICTORY IS WON.
SOME WILL NEVER RETURN.
EMBRACE THESE, FATHER,
AND RECEIVE THEM,
THY HEROIC SERVANTS,
INTO THY KINGDOM.

On the interior wall north of the doorway is engraved this extract from General Eisenhower's final report to the Combined Chiefs of Staff:

MORE IMPORTANT THAN WEAPONS
WAS THE INDOMITABLE FIGHTING SPIRIT
OF THE MEN WHO WIELDED THEM.
THE COURAGE AND DEVOTION TO DUTY
WHICH THEY EXHIBITED THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN
WERE UNSURPASSABLE.

TO THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES,
AND TO THOSE WHO BEAR THE WOUNDS OF BATTLE,
WE, THEIR COMRADES IN ARMS,
RENDER MOST GRATEFUL AND HUMBLE TRIBUTE.

Windows of stained glass, four on each side, portray the coats of arms of eight towns or cities liberated during these operations; viz, Carentan, Cherbourg, St. Lo, Mont St. Michel, Mortain, Paris, Chartres, and Brest. Each window also illustrates a characteristic feature of the respective towns. The stained glass windows throughout the memorial were designed and fabricated by Francois Lorin of Chartres, France.

On the north wall of the museum is the map, "The Breakout from the Beachhead and Advance to the Seine." Both this map and the operations map on the south wall were designed by Edward Shenton of West Chester, PA, and fabricated by the Earley Studios of Rosslyn, VA. The backgrounds are colored concretes with various brilliantly colored glass aggregates into which have been set bronze lettering, other metal features, enameled panels, etc. The map, "The Breakout from the Beachhead and Advance to the Seine," is designed in perspective as seen from the south. It is flanked on its west end by the following explanatory inscription in English, on its East End by a similar explanatory inscription in French:

ON 6 JUNE 1944, UNITED STATES AND BRITISH COMMONWEALTH FORCES CROSSED THE ENGLISH CHANNEL TO ENTER OCCUPIED FRANCE THIS WAS THE CULMINATION OF MONTHS OF PREPARATION AND NATIONWIDE EFFORT. AS THE VAST ARMADA MOVED TOWARD THE NORMANDY BEACHES, ONE BRITISH AND TWO AMERICAN AIRBORNE DIVISIONS DROPPED IN THE DARKNESS TO COVER THE DEPLOYMENT FROM THE BEACHES. AT 0630 HOURS, UNDER COVER OF CONCENTRATED AERIAL AND NAVAL BOMBARDMENT, THREE AMERICAN, ONE CANADIAN, AND TWO BRITISH DIVISIONS STORMED ASHORE.

THE ASSALTING FORCES, DESPITE DESPERATE RESISTANCE, DROVE VALIANTLY INLAND AND WITHIN A WEEK LINKED UP INDIVIDUAL BEACHES. TURNING NORTH, AMERICAN UNITS, AIDED BY NAVAL AND AIR BOMBARDMENT, CAPTURED CHERBOURG WHILE OTHER ALLIED FORCES HACKED OUT THE BEACHHEAD TO A DEPTH OF 20 MILES AGAINST TENACIOUS OPPOSITION IN THE AGGRESSIVELY DEFENDED HEDGEROWS. THE ENEMY'S EFFORTS TO RUSH REINFORCEMENTS TO HIS MENACED ARMIES WERE PERSISTENTLY DISRUPTED BY ATTACKS BY THE U.S. EIGHTH AND NINTH AIR FORCES AND THE ROYAL AIR FORCE, EXTENDING FAR TO HIS REAR, ON BRIDGES, HIGHWAYS, AND RAILROADS.

ON 25 JULY THE U.S. FIRST ARMY LAUNCHED THE ATTACK TO BREAK OUT OF THE BEACHHEAD. BLASTED ALONG A FIVE-MILE FRONT WEST OF ST. LO BY A PARALYZING AIR BOMBARDMENT, THE ENEMY GAVE WAY BEFORE THE FURIOUS GROUND ASSAULT WHICH FOLLOWED. JOINING IN THE ATTACK, THE U.S. THIRD ARMY THRUST RAPIDLY SOUTHWARD TOWARD THE LOIRE. NEAR MORTAIN A POWERFUL COUNTERATTACK, INTENDED BY THE GERMANS TO CUT OFF OUR ADVANCING COLUMNS, WAS REPULSED WITH HEAVY LOSSES. THEN, WHILE THE ARMIES IN THE BEACHHEAD CONTINUED TO PRESS FORWARD, AMERICAN FORCES SWUNG UP FROM THE SOUTH TOWARD ARGENTAN. THREATENED WITH ENCIRCLEMENT, POUNDED INCESSANTLY BY WAVES OF AIRCRAFT, THE ENEMY STROVE DESPERATELY TO ESCAPE TO THE EAST BUT BY 21 AUGUST HIS TROOPS IN THE FALAISE POCKET HAD BEEN ANNIHILATED AS A FIGHTING FORCE.

AS THE ALLIED FORCES STEADILY GREW IN STRENGTH THEIR SWEEP ACROSS FRANCE GAINED MOMENTUM. BY 25 AUGUST THEY HAD CROSSED THE SEINE, HAD LIBERATED PARIS, AND WERE IN FULL PURSUIT TOWARD THE GERMAN BORDER.

ALREADY THE UNITED STATES AND ALLIED NAVIES HAD TRANSPORTED OR ESCORTED TO NORMANDY MORE THAN 3,000,000 TONS OF SUPPLIES AND 2,000,000 TROOPS TOGETHER WITH THEIR ARTILLERY, TANKS, AND VEHICLES.

Beneath each of these inscriptions is a set of three key maps, "The War Against Germany" on the west and "The War Against Japan" on the east.

On the south wall is the map, "Military Operations in Western Europe" showing the progress of the military operations in northern France and northwest Europe from the

landing in Normandy to the end of the war, together with a flanking descriptive text in English and French, of which the following is the English version at the east end:

IN THE WAKE OF THE SWIFT ALLIED ADVANCE ACROSS NORTHERN FRANCE STRONG ENEMY GARRISONS STUBBORNLY CLUNG TO MANY LARGE SEAPORTS. THUS DENIED ADEQUATE HARBORS THE ALLIES HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO UNLOAD THEIR SUPPLIES AND REINFORCEMENTS OVER THE NORMANDY BEACHES OR THROUGH THE SINGLE CRIPPLED PORT OF CHERBOURG. THE EFFICIENT PERFORMANCE OF THE TREMENDOUS TASKS PLACED UPON SUPPLY PERSONNEL OF THE ARMY AND NAVY WAS A VITAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE SWEEPING VICTORY WHICH LIBERATED FRANCE.

ALTHOUGH HANDICAPPED BY RAPIDLY LENGTHENING SUPPLY LINES. THE ALLIED FORCES, AIDED BY AIR LIFT, MAINTAINED THEIR VIGOROUS PURSUIT OF THE FLEEING ENEMY. BY MID-SEPTEMBER 1944 THE BRITISH AND CANADIANS HAD CLEARED THE CHANNEL COAST, EXCEPT FOR A FEW ISOLATED PORTS. HAD CAPTURED THE CITY OF ANTWERP, AND HAD ENTERED HOLLAND. THE U.S. FIRST ARMY OF THE 12TH ARMY GROUP HAD SWEEPED THROUGH FRANCE, BELGIUM, AND LUXEMBOURG, AND WAS STANDING ON THE THRESHOLD OF GERMANY, WHILE THE U.S. THIRD ARMY IN A SWIFT ADVANCE HAD REACHED THE MOSELLE ON THE RIGHT FLANK, THE 6TH ARMY GROUP (U.S. SEVENTH AND FRENCH FIRST ARMIES), ROLLING NORTHWARD FROM THE BEACHES OF SOUTHERN FRANCE, HAD JOINED FORCES WITH THE U.S. THIRD ARMY AT SOMBERNON. IN BRITTANY THE RECENTLY ACTIVATED U.S. NINTH ARMY, ASSISTED BY AIR AND NAVAL BOMBARDMENT, WAS BESIEGING BREST WHOSE GARRISON SURRENDERED ON 18 SEPTEMBER.

THE NEXT THREE MONTHS SAW BITTER FIGHTING IN THE EFFORT TO BREAK THROUGH THE GERMAN FRONTIER DEFENSES. ON 11 SEPTEMBER THE ALLIED ARMIES SET FOOT ON GERMAN SOIL ON 17 SEPTEMBER THE ALLIED FIRST AIRBORNE ARMY DROPPED IN THE EINDHOVEN-ARNHEM AREA IN A GALLANT BUT UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO OUTFLANK THE FORTIFIED SIEGFRIED LINE. BY DOGGED EFFORT THE BRITISH SECOND ARMY, THE CANADIAN FIRST ARMY, AND THE NEWLY ARRIVED U.S. NINTH ARMY REACHED THE MEUSE AND ROER RIVERS. THE U.S. FIRST ARMY FOUGHT ITS WAY THROUGH THE SIEGFRIED LINE TO REACH AACHEN AND THE HURTGEN FOREST. THE FORTRESS OF METZ FELL AS THE U.S. THIRD ARMY PUSHED TO THE SAAR. FARTHER SOUTH THE 6TH ARMY GROUP CAPTURED STRASBOURG AND MULHOUSE.

ON 16 DECEMBER THE ENEMY MADE HIS LAST DESPERATE EFFORT TO STAVE OFF DISASTER. PREPARED IN GREATEST SECRECY AND LAUNCHED UNDER COVER OF FOG AND RAIN, HIS ATTACK IN THE ARDENNES WAS INITIALLY SUCCESSFUL. PROMPT DECISIVE MEASURES AND THE SUPERB FIGHTING QUALITIES OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN TURNED THE GERMAN ADVANCE INTO RETREAT. THE

CONCURRENT GERMAN OFFENSIVE BETWEEN SAARBRUCKEN AND COLMAR MET THE SAME FATE.

DURING FEBRUARY AND EARLY MARCH THE WEST BANK OF THE RHINE WAS CLEARED IN A SERIES OF BRILLIANTLY SUCCESSFUL TACTICAL OPERATIONS. ON 7 MARCH AMERICAN FORCES SEIZED A BRIDGE AT REMAGEN. A SURPRISE CROSSING WAS EFFECTED AT OPPENHEIM ON 22 MARCH IN THE NEXT TWO DAYS ALLIED TROOPS ASSISTED BY NAVAL LANDING CRAFT STAGED ASSAULT CROSSINGS FARTHER DOWNSTREAM AND THEN SURGED FORWARD TO ISOLATE THE ENTIRE RUHR VALLEY REGION AND ITS DEFENDING FORCES BY A DOUBLE ENVELOPMENT. WITH AIR AND GROUND FORCES OPERATING AS A TEAM THE ALLIED FORCES SWEEP ACROSS GERMANY TO MEET THE ADVANCING TROOPS OF THE U.S.S.R. AT THE ELBE, ENTER CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND AUSTRIA, AND FORCE THE COMPLETE SURRENDER OF ALL GERMAN FORCES CONFRONTING THEM ON 8 MAY, 337 DAYS AFTER THE INITIAL LANDINGS IN NORMANDY.

The map also bears this significant reminder of the part played by the Strategic Air forces:

FROM 1942 TO 1945 THE UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCES AND THE ROYAL AIR FORCE INCESSANTLY ATTACKED DEEP INTO ENEMY TERRITORY TO DISLOCATE AND DESTROY HIS MILITARY AND INDUSTRIAL SYSTEMS.

CHAPEL

At the east end of the museum, separated from it by a low granite divider and wrought iron gates, is the chancel. The face of the granite divider bears this inscription:

O LORD SUPPORT US ALL THE DAY LONG
UNTIL THE SHADOWS LENGTHEN
AND OUR WORK IS DONE
THEN IN THY MERCY
GRANT US A SAFE LODGING
AND PEACE AT THE LAST.

The altar in the chancel is of French Harteville Perle limestone from the Juras. High above it is a large stained glass window in the shape of a sexfoil. Centered in the window is the seal of the United States. Each of the six circular stained glass areas on the perimeter of the sexfoil contains three stars. Above the window is engraved the inscription from Exodus XVI, 7:

IN THE MORNING YE SHALL SEE
THE GLORY OF THE LORD.

On the wall below the window and above the altar is a blue and gold damask hanging. Centered on the altar is a Latin cross flanked by two candlesticks.

TABLETS OF THE MISSING

Along the gently curving walls emanating from the memorial terrace are inscribed the name, rank, organization, and State of 498 of our Missing:

United States Army and Army Air Forces	449
United States Navy	48
United States Coast Guard	1

These men have given their lives in the service of their Country but their remains have not been recovered or if recovered not identified. they came from the District of Columbia, Canada, and every State of the Union except Alaska, Hawaii, Nevada, and New Hampshire.

On the walls below the flagstaffs is this inscription together with the French translation:

HERE ARE RECORDED THE NAMES OF
AMERICANS WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES
IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY AND
WHO SLEEP IN UNKNOWN GRAVES
1941-1945.

These inscription panels are of Beaumont stone from southwestern France.

GRAVES AREA

There are 4,410 American military personnel buried in the cemetery. Their 4,408 headstones are set in 16 fan shaped plots, curving from the central mall. These Dead, who gave their lives in our Country's service, came from every State in the Union and the District of Columbia.

Ninety-five of the headstones mark graves of "unknowns;" two of these graves contain the remains of two Unknowns that could not be separated.

Here also, in twenty instances, two brothers rest side by side.

At the far (east) end of the mall is a rectangular stone cenotaph of LaPyrrie granite designed by Lee Lawrie and executed by the French sculptor, Augustine Beggi. Carved upon it are a torch and laurel wreath in bas-relief and the words:

PROPATRIA
1941-1945.

PLANTINGS

The cemetery is surrounded by a Hawthorn (*Crataegus oxyacantha*) hedge with an interior hedge of Boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) enclosing the grave plots. The space of varying width between the two hedges is planted with shade trees, both evergreen and deciduous, including Giant Sequoia (*Sequoia gigantea*), White Fir (*Abies concolor*), Norway Spruce (*Picea abies*), Scotch Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), Holly Oak (*Quercus ilex*), Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), Purple Beech (*Fagus sylvatica purpurea*), European Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), European Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), European Oak (*Quercus robur*) and European Elm (*Ulmus procera*). In the broad grass walks dividing the grave plots are flowering trees which bloom from late spring far into the summer. These include Crabapple (*Malus floribunda*), Double Hawthorn (*Crataegus oxyacantha flora plena*), Pagoda Tree (*Sophora japonica*), Golden rain Tree (*Koelreuteria paniculata*), and Yellow Wood tree (*Cladrastis lutea*). The central mall of the cemetery and the perimeter of the grave plots are lined with rows of European Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*). A number of rose beds and blooming shrubs such as rhododendron are grown in various locations and provide a colorful aspect.